THE COVENANT OF GRACE

Effectually Remembred.

Being the Substance of a

SERMON

OR TWO.

Preached by a MINISTER of the GOSPEL.

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The Covenant of GRACE, &c.

Pſal. 105. 8.

He hath remembred his Covenant for ever, the word which *he commanded to a thouſand Generations.*

1 Chron. 16. 15.

Be ye mindful always of his Covenant, the word which *he commanded to a thouſand Generations.*

THERE being ſuch an apparent Diſſonance between theſe *two places* relating to the ſame Matter, makes me to obſerve it, and to ſet theſe two places one with the other, for my Text, at this time; truſting, that after a little time we ſhall find a ſweet Harmony in them; and that in this place, as well as in other like places of Scripture, where the ſame things are repeated with ſome variety, it is not in any Contradiction, but uſually for greater Illuſtration and Advantage. You vvill find the Holy Ghoſt in this place of the *Chronicles* begins with the firſt fifteen Verſes of this 105. Pſalm, and goes on vvith a part of the 96. Pſalm, *&c.* And in thoſe fifteen Verſes they are almoſt the ſame to a vvord, only in this one place, wherein the variety is ſo remarkable.

The Deſign of the *Pſalm* is to ſet forth Gods Praiſe, an holy Excitation of the Soul to this great and excellent Duty: And taking up ſeveral Heads vvhich are proper matter for this Work. And Gods *marvellous works* he bids them to remember, *ver.* 12. in the *Chronicles*, and *ver.* 5. of the *Pſalm.* And then ſeems

to enforce this Duty upon Gods peculiar people, *the ſeed of* Abraham, ſo called in the *Pſalm*; and *the ſeed of* Iſrael in the *Chapter*.

Theſe, upon the account of their Covenant-Intereſt in God, have ſpecial Obligation to this Duty; and this very Relation is ſpecial matter or ground of it. Let ſuch be ſure to be mindful of Gods praiſe, as the duty of their Relation; and let them do it, becauſe they are ſuch, and are favoured and dignified vvith ſuch a Relation. In the *Pſalm* he declares in the continued matter of his Praiſe, That *God doth remember his Covenant for ever.* In the *Chapter*, as a part of the Expreſſion of praiſe for this Goodneſs and Faithfulneſs of God, he exhorts the Faithful, That they *ſhould always be mindful of Gods Covenant.*

Novv to ſhevv that there is no Contradiction in theſe Scriptures, and ſuch like; it may be obſerved, That though theſe *Pſalms*, for part of them, are very like, and perhaps the ſame; yet it doth not follow, that they were delivered at the ſame time. As ſome of our Saviours vvords in the Goſpel that are diverſly reported by the Evangeliſts, many think the ſame things might be ſpoken more than once by our Saviour: and ſo one Evangeliſt may relate the ſame words as ſpoken at one time, and upon one occaſion; and another mentions them as ſpoken at another time, and upon another occaſion; and ſo there may be ſome variety in the words related by them; and yet both truly the vvords of our Saviour, and true too. So *Pſalm* 14. and 53. are upon the matter the very ſame; yet it is conceived they were twice delivered by the *Pſamiſt*, and it may be on different Occaſions. So in the *Chapter* here, *ver.* 7. it is ſaid in that day *David firſt* delivered this *Pſalm*; vvhich doth imply, it might be delivered *after*, with ſome variation.

So

So when he *first* delivered this *Pſalm*, the words came as an exhortation to duty on our part, *to be always mindful of his Covenant.* In the place in the *Pſalms*, the words come in by way of declaration of what God himſelf is pleaſed to do for us in this behalf, *He hath remembred his Covenant for ever.*

Now without doubt when the ſame holy *Pſalmiſt* came upon another occaſion to fall into the ſame matter, he did not make the Variation in this thing, but upon gracious and ingenuous conſiderations, and theſe expreſſions ſhould refer to the ſame deſign and purpoſe, with reſpect to the matter of God praiſe. As if when he ſhould have ſaid, *Be ye always mindful of his Covenant*, whilſt your heart is enlarged in his praiſe; he here ſays, to promote this holy affection and truſt of Gods goodneſs to you, for which you ſhould always praiſe him, That God himſelf doth *always remember his Covenant.*

It is his grace to *remember his Covenant for ever.*

It is Man's duty *to be always mindful of it.* And they do *mutuo ſe ponere*, they ſuppoſe and advantage one the other, the one as the requiſite means and condition of the other, the other as a priviledg and reward for that again.

Obſ. *That it is to one and the ſame gracious effect and purpoſe, that both God and man are always mindful of Gods Covenant.*

It is Mans Duty and Intereſt always to be mindful of it; and it is his great advantage and comfort, that God will remember it for ever.

God *hath* always remembred, that is our glory and priviledg.

Man *ſhould* always mind it, that's his Work and Duty.

I ſhall

I ſhall ſhew. 1. *What this Covenant is, that is thus minded on both hands.*

2. *How God does always remember it.*

3. *How we ſhould always be mindful of it.*

4. *How theſe do mutually refer unto, and imply one the other, or comply jointly to promote the ſame deſign, and to procure the ſame effect.*

1. *What is this Covenant, that is thus remembred on both ſides?* Why, it ſeems to be his word of promiſe ſet out in particular in his Oath to *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Iſrael*, that he would give them that good Land; which Covenant took effect after great length of time, and through many difficulties and unlikelihoods, and yet he remembred it to the ſeed of thoſe unto whom he made the promiſe. A glorious inſtance of Gods truth and faithfulneſs! What he promiſes, he will do. And this Covenant in the particular inſtance here, doth relate and ſpecify the temporal bleſſing of that People in the promiſed Land; but this was but a part of the Covenant he entred into with *Abraham*, and but a pledg and ſhadow of that better Land that he had provided for them and their ſeed: to wit, the benefit of the Covenant of Grace, the Covenant of Life and Salvation through Jeſus Chriſt. This God will remember for ever, and this we ſhould always be mindful of.

Now this Covenant of Grace is that which God freely entred into with *Adam*, renewed it to *Abraham*, in the promiſe, That as the *ſeed of the Woman ſhould break the Serpents head*; ſo in *the ſeed of* Abraham *all the Nations of the Earth ſhould be bleſſed.* He revived it to *Moſes* and his People, and under Types and Shadows prefigured Chriſt, and the benefits for the Soul, which were to be expected from him.

Gen. 3. 15.

Gen. 12. 3.

To

To *David* he ſwears, That the fruits of his Body ſhould rule; and the Saints by faith embraced the promiſe: and when the fulneſs of time was come, the bleſſed Chriſt came, *the Covenant*, *Iſa.* 42. 6. and the Mediator of it: *The word which he hath Commanded to a Thouſand Generations*, *i. e.* The word of promiſe which he *hath commanded*; that is, hath appointed to be thrown out for his Servants to rely upon; that which is firm and ſetled, is ſaid to be *commanded*, as Pſal. 42 8. *God commands his loving-kindneſs*; and *Pſal.* 133. 3. he *commands the bleſſing*. And it is a certain number for an uncertain, *a Thouſand Generations*; that is, for ever.

God engages with fallen man upon royal and bleſſed terms to be reconciled and engaged to him. He will forgive, and give grace and glory. Man is to believe, repent and obey.

Poor ſinners could claim and expect nothing, but God makes himſelf a debtor to his truth, and promiſe, and oath: *This Covenant is everlaſting, ordered in all things, and ſure*, 2 Sam. 23. 5. 2 *Tim.* 1. 1. The bleſſed Apoſtle ſtiles himſelf an *Apoſtle*, a meſſenger of God to Souls; and the matter of his meſſage, *The promiſe of life which is in Chriſt Jeſus*. 1 Joh. 5. 11, 12. *This is the record*, (the whole buſineſs of the Goſpel Written and Preached) *that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son*, &c. Life is promiſed, and is to be Preached to ſinners; if they come in and cloſe with Chriſt, He will pardon ſinners, give them grace, change their hearts, give them peace, keep them to perſevere, bring them through Death to Glory. Man is to believe, repent and obey, and to walk worthy of it: According to that of *Ezekiel* 16. 8. *I ſware unto thee, and entred into Covenant with thee, ſaid the Lord God, and thou becameſt mine.*

2. *God*

2. *God always remembers his Covenant.* It is ſacred to him. Many forget their promiſes, and keep them not, but God is known by his truth and faithfulneſs. He hath *exalted his word above all his name,* Pſal. 138. 2.

1. He remembers his Covenant to perform it; *faithful is he that hath called you,* (and that upon his promiſe of acceptance) and he alſo will do it. What promiſe he makes, you may write upon it. He is not as man, that he ſhould lye; he will not alter the thing that is gone out of his lips. None of his words ſhall fall to the ground: He is a God keeping Covenant for ever, Mic. 7. 20. *He will perform the truth to* Jacob, *and the mercy to* Abraham, *which God hath ſworn from the days of old.* It was Mercy in the Original; it is Truth in the purſuance of it. What he hath promiſed in his infinite Mercy, he will perform in his inviolable Truth. To all intents and purpoſes he will perform the Covenant, for he ever remembers it.

2. More particularly. He is mindful of his Covenant, to perform many glorious things for believers, that are the reſult of the Covenant, which the Soul was undone without, and could never be looked for, but for the promiſe.

The Covenant obtains it.

1. *For infinite forbearance and long-ſuffering.* He hath promiſed to ſuffer long, to wait to be gracious; he is ſlow to anger, *Exod.* 34 6. One Orient Jewel in that royal Character and Name of his, is, that he is *long-ſuffering,* 1. To bear with us till we repent; how is it that we are not deſtroyed for ſin, before the time of repentance comes, but from this infinite patience of God? 2. To bear with us after we repent and ſin again. That delivers us yet

Hanc longanimitatem, Deum ſapientiſſimo conſilio erga homines adhibere, quia (ut vitè Auguſt. notavit) niſi expectaret impium, non inveniret quem glorificaret pium. Rivet. in Exod. 34. 6.

yet again, tho' we have broken our vows with him. 3. To bear with them that never repent, *Ro.* 9. 22. That ſinners that repent not, nor never will, are not immediately ruined and deſtroyed from the preſence of the Lord, is ſure from the Covenant; and that the wickedeſt are not *deſtroyed*, as ſoon as they *are*, is ſure from the Covenant, and from Chriſt, whom God doth ever remember.

2. *For pardon upon repentance.* He hath promiſed to *forgive iniquities, trangreſſion and ſin*, Exod. 34. 7. All words put in to ſignify *Sin*, to make the aſſurance of pardon full and ſtrong, *Mic.* 7. 18, 19. *Pſal.* 103. 8, 11, 12. Here is a poor ſinner convinced of the evil of ſin, and of his own particular wickedneſs; his Eyes are opened as *Adams* were, and he ſees his wickedneſs. What can a poor wretch do in this caſe? Whither can he go? he may, as *Job*, ſay, *I have ſinned, what ſhall I do unto thee, O thou preſerver of men?* To know what it is to be *Guilty* before God, detected of villany, and ſeized and bound over by conſcience to anſwer all to the God that made me, is a ſad and tremendous ſtate of Soul! The Angels ſinned and find no place for repentance. No more could we, if it were not for the Covenant; by this Covenant there is place and room for repentance: *he delighteth in mercy*, and therefore penitents are pardoned. It would little avail at mans bar, if convicted of the crime alledged, to ſay, It is true, my Lord, I have done this thing, but I am ſorry for it; I grieve that I did it, *&c.* Alas! the anſwer would be, Friend, I pity you that you took no better care; but our work is to ſee that you have Juſtice done you, and that the matter of Fact be evidently proved; and if it be, we do Juſtice to Execute the Law upon you. And God might do ſo too

Job 7. 20.

too with every convicted ſinner: but the Covenant is otherwiſe; he hath promiſed to forgive ſuch as repent,
Iſa. 55. 7. *abundantly to pardon:* to multiply forgiveneſs to thoſe that come with their multitudes of iniquities. The poor Rebel comes in upon the Proclamation of Grace, falls down at the Soveraigns feet, acknowledges the iniquity of his ſin; and he then remembers his Covenant, and is ready to forgive; nay, he takes as great pleaſure in forgiving a great offender, as ſuch a one can take to receive a pardon. His bowels are moved towards the broken-hearted penitent, and remembers his Royal word towards them, when ever they come, to relieve and comfort them, and to ſpeak peace unto them. What penitent was ever yet turned back?
Job 33. 27, 28. *He looketh upon men: and if any ſay, I have ſinned, I have perverted that which is right, and it profited me not:* poor miſerable wretch that I am, I have ſinned ſadly and wretchedly, I have done unjuſtly and diſhoneſtly to the laws of my Creation and Nature; baſely and unworthily, and find alſo it never did me good to do on this manner; I have gotten nothing but Guilt, horror and ſorrow by my perverſe way. But I repent, I fly to the Mercy of the Covenant in the caſe: why he looketh for ſuch; and if ſuch a one come thus to him, he will *remember his Covenant*, and
Num. 14. 17, 18. *will deliver his Soul from going into the pit*, and *his life ſhall ſee the light. His power ſhall be great*, to forgive the greateſt ſinners. He hath the abſolute Supreme Power, to forgive all manner of tranſgreſſions; he is not limited, and he can find in his heart to forgive the greateſt ſinners: and when they come, he remembers his Mercy effectually for them, 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. the chiefeſt ſinners may here find Mercy: O, ſays the *Pſalmiſt* (and ſo any Soul that hath felt Guilt will ſay

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the ſame) *Bleſſed is the man whoſe ſin is forgiven*, &c. Pſal. 32. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Let his condition be what it will, ſick, poor, deſpiſed, no matter what it be; if forgiven, he *is bleſſed.* The truth is, I was ſullen, and loath to yield, *and kept ſilence*, I would not be in any fault; or if I was, I would not take to it. I would not honour him for a time by my ſubmiſſion; but I was in ſad caſe that while; all conſumed within me; and then at laſt I ſaid, *I will confeſs my tranſgreſſion:* I will yeild and humble my ſelf, and not hide any thing in the caſe; but throw my ſelf upon his Royal grace, in the way of ſubmiſſion and repentance. And no ſooner did I ſay thus, and conclude thus, and act thus, but I found acceptance, *thou forgaveſt the iniquity of my ſin.* And ſo will he always do with poor ſinners that repent. He hath not proclaimed Mercy, as expecting that none will lay claim to it, or truſt to it, and ſo boggle at it, or go about to diminiſh and leſſen it to thoſe that come in upon it; O no; he delights to ſhew Mercy, and remembers his Covenant fully and effectually in this caſe.

3. *For grace to repent.* It is his Covenant to accept us when we repent, and alſo to help us to repent. They are bleſſed *whoſe ſins are forgiven*, Pſal. 32. 2. *and in whoſe ſpirits there is no Guile:* that is, that honeſtly and without hypocriſy do repent; that do not ſin with thoughts to repent of it; nor do not repent with thoughts to ſin again; this is guile. Now the poor Soul may be convinced of the evil and danger of ſin, and may rejoyce in Mercy offered to the penitent; but ſays it, Wo and alas, How ſhall I repent? how ſhall I be able to repent *truly*, if I do repent? my heart is hard and deceitful: O how ſhall I come acceptably unto God, that I may find Mercy! Is this thy caſe? why God will remember his Covenant to

the Soul that he hath made willing, to make it able. His Covenant is to take away the hard, and to give a ſoft heart; *to write the Law in the heart*, Jer. 31. 33. he hath promiſed to *give the Spirit to them that ask him*, Luk. 11. 13. When we are converted at firſt, or after, God hath remembred his Covenant for us, and hath *bleſſed us, in turning us from our iniquity*, Act 3. 26. And by exalting Chriſt *to be a Prince and Saviour, to give repentance and forgiveneſs of ſins*, Acts 5. 26. He will not forgive, if we turn not heartily to him; but he expects not that we ſhould turn in our own ſtrength; what he requires, he alſo promiſes. *Turn you at my reproof: I will pour out my Spirit upon you:* whenever any ſinner hath repented, God hath remembred his Covenant for him to help him therein; and none ever cryed for help in this caſe, but God hath in faithfulneſs afforded grace unto him.

Pro. 1. 23.

4. *For perſeverance.* The poor ſinner is turned, and hath found the difference in the change; but is apt to forget himſelf, and is ſubject to fall ſadly; but God remembers the Covenant, and he orders it that the Soul ſhall not fall finally. It is by the Covenant that our ſtanding is ſecured, *Jer.* 34. 40. he will not forſake us, nor ſuffer us to depart from him. He will put *his fear into our hearts*, that we ſhall not depart from him. We are kept *by the mighty power of God, through faith, to the day of Salvation*, 1 Pet. 1. 5. *Joh.* 10. 28, 29. Grace being a Creature, might no doubt be loſt; but our Salvation is lodged where it cannot be loſt. It is in the Covenant, and in Chriſts hands; He will not ſuffer our faith to fail, he will take order to bring us back by repentance when we go a ſtray. It is in this faithfulneſs and truth of God, that our ſtanding is ſecured, and therein it cannot fail.

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The Lord will not caſt off his People, ſince it hath pleaſed him to make them his People, 1 *Sam.* 12. 22. when he ſees a poor believer ſtep out of his way, he remembers his Covenant, and ſends ſome conviction, or ſome affliction, to make him bethink himſelf, that he may turn back again; what a ſad havock would be made amongſt them in a little time, if God did not remain faithful to his Covenant, and remember it for us? from this it is, a poor Soul may have confidence (and it is not impudence) to ſay, *I have gone aſtray like a loſt Sheep*, but *Lord ſeek thy Servant*; bring back and reſtore thy poor Servant. * God hath remembred his Covenant for us, or we had long ſince forſaken Chriſt, and given over to follow after him. Pſal. 119. ult.

* *They quarrel thee and would give over*
The bargain made to ſerve thee, but thy love
Holds them unto it, and doth cover
Their follies with the wing of thy mild dove,
Not ſuffering thoſe
Who would, to be thy foes. Herb.

5. *For ſupport and comfort under Temptation.* It is poſſible for one that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the Voice of the Prophet, to be in the dark, and to ſee no light; yet even then let him truſt in the Lord, and ſtay himſelf upon his God. He never forgets to be gracious, he can never ſhut up his loving kindneſs in diſpleaſure, but he will refreſh and give light again; and he diſcernably at the time remembers his Covenant for them, in that whilſt he hides his Face, he draws their heart after him: oft ſorrowful ſinners are afraid to ſin, and are willing to do any thing, which it may be they would not be ſo ready to, if they had the peace and joy which they want. He is faithful to them in all their deſertions; and further than it is beſt for them, their troubles ſhall neither encreaſe nor continue. *Light is ſown for* all *the righteous, and gladneſs for the upright in heart.* It is *ſown*, and it will come up; It Iſa. 50. 10. Pſal. 97. 11.

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is ſown in the Covenant and in the Promiſe, and it is ſown in their humiliation of Soul, and it is ſown in the holineſs of their hearts, and harmleſneſs of their lives, and in the beſt time it will come up: they ſhall return with joy, and bring their ſheaves with them. Chriſt the bleſſed Mediator of the Covenant, was tempted, and he knows how to pity and ſuccour them that are tempted, *Heb.* 2. 18. The ſoul in this caſe may ſay, as Mic. 7. 8, 9. *When I fall, I ſhall ariſe; when I ſit in darkneſs, the Lord ſhall be a light unto me. He will bring me forth unto the light, and I ſhall behold his righteouſneſs.* Read *Iſa.* 40. 27. to the end.

6. *For a ſanctified ſufficiency of outward things.* Godlineſs hath the promiſe of the life that now is, and of that which is to come, 1 *Tim.* 4. 8. And, ſeek
Pſal. 111. 5. the Kingdom of Heaven *firſt*, and theſe *things ſhall be added*, Mat. 6. 33. your father *knoweth that ye need theſe things*; and he doth remember his Covenant, and he doth give them. *He hath given meat to them that fear him, he is ever mindful of his Covenant.* Are any truly good, extreamly poor? Why, 1. You take no notice how many good men proſper in the World, and more than others; this is not noted; but if but one be poor, this muſt be noted to be ſure. 2. Good men, leſs will ſerve them, than other men. 3. They make conſcience to avoid idleneſs, and to take pains in their places: and God doth uſually bleſs the diligent; they ſtand fairer for theſe things than any. 4 It may be more might be had, if the promiſe and providence of God were more eyed and relyed upon than it is. 5. However God makes it out to the truly good, whatever their condition is: And they have all, ſince they want not what they have not; and this con-

content is from the Covenant-Grace. *Godlineſs with contentment is great gain*, 1 Tim. 6. 6. He ſupplies his Children with freſh neceſſaries, and excuſes them the care and trouble, and reckoning for abundance. But he is faithful in his Covenant for the worldly concerns of all that are his.

7. *For neceſſary, ſeaſonable and ſanctified afflictions. As a father chaſteneth his Son, ſo the Lord thy God hath chaſtened thee.* Deut. 8. 5. It is ſo far from being in the Covenant that you ſhould not be afflicted, (fain poor wretches would have it ſo) that it is expreſly a part of this bleſſed Covenant that we muſt be afflicted, *Heb.* 12. 5, 6. And God remembers for us his bleſſed Covenant about our afflictions, in the greateſt goodneſs, truth and faithfulneſs. 1. To ſee that all his be afflicted when they need, 1 *Pet.* 1. 6. 2. That they be afflicted in meaſure, *Iſa.* 27. 7, 8. 3. To be ſupported under them, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. 4. To be delivered out of them, *Pſal.* 34. 19. 5. To have good by them. *Ro.* 8. 28. *Pſal.* 25. 10. He will not have them in the furnace to be conſumed, but only to be tryed; *tho he cauſe grief, yet he will have compaſſion according to the multitude of his mercies*, Lam. 3. 31, 32. and as a Father pities his Children, ſo the Lord pities them that fear him, for he knows their frame, and remembers they are but duſt, *Pſal.* 103. 13, 14, *&c.* He remembers for them his Covenant, when they are in diſtreſs, *Pſal.* 106. 45. *I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that in faithfulneſs thou haſt afflicted me*, Pſal. 119. 75. O my bleſſed God! true and faithful is thy Covenant, the word that thou haſt commanded to a Thouſand Generations; thou haſt remembred thy Covenant for me, to my Soul, to my outward ſupplies, and in my needed good afflicti-

afflictions, which I could not have been without, no not one of them. This a good Soul will ſay after all.

8. *For ſafety at death, and for eternal life.* It is his expreſs Covenant to give eternal life. Again and again, Chriſt hath ſaid, I give unto them *eternal life*, Joh. 10. 28, and 17. 2. *Thou wilt guide me with thy counſel, and afterward bring me to glory*, Pſal. 73. 24. Death is terrible to Nature; but when I come to dye, God will remember his Covenant with me, and will help me to dye. The good man cried out not in vain when dying, *Lord be thou now preſent with thy poor Servant that is conteſting with whole eternity*; thou art now leaving all thou knoweſt, *thine age is departed*, thou muſt now go into an unknown ſtate, to leave the world, and men, and to go amongſt Spirits: but God will remember thee then, he will ſend to help thee, he will ſend comfort to thee, he will deliver thee from the evil of death, and from *the fear of death*, *Heb.* 2. 14, 15. 2 *Tim.* 1. 12. He will keep the Soul for eternal life, which thou haſt committed to him, 2 *Tim.* 1. 12. and 4. 7, 8. The ſhip in the dry harbor cannot be lanched; but when the tide comes in, it goes out with eaſe. If heavenly comforts flow in upon thee, thou ſhalt go hence with eaſe and triumph: he will remember his Covenant for his dying Servants, and make their laſt act, eaſie, ſafe and bleſſed.

9. *For poſterity.* The bleſſed Covenant is with us, and with our Children: *for he keepeth mercy for thouſands*, Exod. 34. 7. that is, for thouſands of Generations. *As he viſiteth the Sins of the Fathers upon the third and fourth Generation*; ſo he keepeth mercy for Thouſands of Generations of them that love him. As there is *keeping* of judgment for Poſterity in ſome caſes,

caſes, ſo there is much more a *keeping* of Mercy for Poſterity; and becauſe *he delighteth in Mercy*, (as Mic. 7. 18.) therefore it is on this ſide a thouſand to three or four. He remembereth his Covenant *for Childrens Children*, to ſuch as keep his Covenant and remem bers his Commandments to do them. *The Children of thy Servants ſhall ſtand faſt in thy ſight, and their ſeed ſhall be eſtabliſhed before thee*, (Pſal. 102. ult.) For grace it ſelf, the promiſe goes from the Poſterity of the Godly, Iſa. 44. 3. *I will pour out my Spirit upon thy ſeed, and my bleſſing upon their offspring.* He is a Fountain of rich and infinite Mercy; and he hath *laid up*, after he hath *laid out.* He hath as ſurely and fully ſhewed Mercy to thee, as if thou hadſt been the firſt come-over, and as if thy Father had ſpent him none before thee; and he hath Mercy as ready for thy Child, as if he had laid out none upon thee: ſuch it is to live upon infinite and inexhauſtible goodneſs, that is always full and over-flowing, and can never be drawn dry! He thus remembers his Covenant for ever, the word which he hath commanded to a *Thouſand Generations.* And for the ſad Objection that ſome make in this caſe, That ſo many of the Children of good parents do ſo wofully miſcarry; it doth not cloud this truth. For: Pſal. 103. 17. 18.

1. We take no notice of the many Children of good Parents that do well; wherein Gods Covenant doth moſt graciouſly obtain, to the comfort and joy of ſuch Parents, and to the Obſervation of others. But if one Child of a good man miſprove, this is greatly noted, as indeed well it may be; nay ſometimes but one or two of ſeveral miſcarry, and ſeveral others do well, and God is not glorified as he ſhould be for this great Mercy.

2. There are ſome Children of bad Parents are converted and do well; and how can we tell, but that this is from the Covenant that ſome remote Parents were in, and God remembers them when they are forgotten in the World, and takes their Children's Children after many Generations, in faithfulneſs unto them; and who can tell but theſe bad Children's Children may likewiſe come in?

3. It may be, if the Covenant was better underſtood, and better kept, and better taken hold of for Children than it is, it might more effectually operate for them in the caſe they are in; who knows but that Mercy might ſooner be obtained for them, and they might yet turn to their Fathers God, and *the diſobedient* might yet come in again to the *wiſdom of the juſt?*

4. And who knows yet what may be done for theſe Children of the Covenant? God may remember Mercy for them, and bring them back again.

5. And doth not God remember his Covenant for ſuch Children, in that tho they have not the deſired *grace* of the Covenant, yet God gives them the *diſcipline* of the Covenant, *Pſal.* 89. 31, 32, 33. God doth correct them duly for their Trangreſſions, and they are uſually croſſed, as ſome others in their Circumſtances are not. *It is not ordinary for bad Children of good Parents to proſper in the World:* they may account to be croſſed; which I take to be Gods remembring the Covenant of their Fathers for them, to withhold them thereby from ſome degrees of wickedneſs, and to keep them ſtill in the way of cure and recovery by their afflictions.

So that he doth remember his Covenant for ever with reſpect to our Children.

10. *For*

10. *For the Church of God.* He ſtill will have a Church, the gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt it. The Enemies ſhall not be able to root it out. God hath not caſt off his People, when they are in greateſt diſtreſſes, *he hath remebered for them his holy Covenant.* When his People were in *Egypt* in great diſtreſs and bondage, he ſays, *I have heard the groanings of the Children of Iſrael, whom the Egyptians keep in Bondage; and I have remembered my Covenant.* And we know how effectual it was, for their thorough and ſpeedy deliverance: *when there is none ſhut up nor none left,* he will then own his Relation to his own People. He ſware to *Abraham* to give him that Land, whereas yet he had no Child, when ſo long there was ſo few; when oppreſſed ſo long in *Egypt*, yet it is done at laſt. If the promiſe ſeem to run under ground, yet it ſhall break out again in a mighty ſtream, *Iſa.* 43. 1. to the 8.

Pſal. 106. 45

Exod. 6. 5.

His Covenant for his whole People as his Church, (as the body of Chriſt, *the fulneſs of him that filleth all in all*, Eph. 1. 23) ſhall obtain it in two things eſpecially.

1. That whatever advantages Enemies get, ſhall in the end make againſt them. It is but to ripen them for their ruin; they do but in one miſery fill up the meaſure of their iniquity, and the full account will be brought upon them: and they ſhall not do what they will neither. 2*ly*, Whatever the Church ſuffers, ſhall in the end tend to its advantage: the very ſufferings for the truth ſhall advance it. *Philip.* 1 12. all tends to the *furtherance of the goſpel*; the blood of the Martyrs is the ſeed of the Church.

3ly. *How ſhould we be always mindful of this Covenant?*

1. *To cloſe with it.* In an utter diſclaim and abhorrence of all worth of thy own, to lay hold of the grace of the Covenant. *To fly for refuge to the hope that is ſet before thee*; let the righteouſneſs of Chriſt reign in thy Soul continually. *Count all but loſs and dung, that you may win Chriſt, and be found in him.* If he be extream to *mark what is amiſs, who can ſtand? but* (by the Covenant) *there is forgiveneſs with him*; we are undone but for the Promiſe that hath no foundation but meer Mercy and Goodneſs. The *Eunuchs* and the ſtrangers, *that take hold of the Covenant*, ſhall find favour. This explicite owning of the Covenant is our duty and intereſt, as in all the benefits of it, (*Iſa.* 44. 5.) The Soul conſents to the match, to belive and to recive Chriſt. They delivered and gave up themſelves *to the Lord, and unto us* (2 *Cor* 8. 5.) We Miniſters, as the friends of the Bridegroom, ſue for conſent in this caſe; *we pray you in Chriſts ſtead, that ye be reconciled unto God*, 2 Cor. 5. 20. And men ſhould be mindful always to do their duty on this account.

Heb. 6. 18.

Phil. 3. 8, 9.

Pſal. 103. 3, 4.

Iſa. 56. 4, 6.

2. *To keep it. Gods Mercy is Everlaſting to them that keep his Covenant, and remember his Commandments to do them*, Pſal. 103. 17, 18. They are mindful of the Covenant, that feel themſelves under the force of its obligation, that obſerve the terms and the condition of it, that they may keep up their title to all the benefits of it, Exod. 19. 5. *If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my Covenant, then ye ſhall be a People unto me above all People, for all the Earth is mine.* If ye will have me remember my Covenant for you, you muſt be mindful to live by the rules of it: to take heed

heed that you *forget not the the Covenant of God. Iſa.* 44. 17. but that *with purpoſe of heart you cleave unto the Lord*, Acts 11. 23.

3. *To truſt to it.* God would be believed and relyed on. He would have men *to ſet their hope* on him, *Pſal.* 78. 7. He taketh pleaſure in *them that fear him, and in thoſe that hope in his Mercy*, Pſal. 33. 18. The Church relies for pardon upon the Covenant which is compounded of *Mercy* and *Truth*, *Mic.* 7. *ult.* He takes pleaſure to be truſted: Be always mindful of his Covenant, ſo as to truſt in the Lord at all times, *Pſal.* 62. 8. for every thing, Soul and Body, Self and Others, Private and Publick.

4. *To plead it. Remember thy word to thy Servant, wherein thou haſt cauſed me to put my truſt, Pſal.* 119. 49. ſays holy *David*. And *Nehemiah* when he prayed for the Church in great diſtreſs, he pleads with God in prayer from this, That he is God that *keepeth Covenant and Mercy* for them that fear him, and obſerve his Commandments, *Neh.* 1. 5. and 9. 32. the beſt Plea we can have at the Throne of Grace, and that which an infinitely good God, that remembers his Covenant for ever, delights to be argued with.

5. *To renew it.* Frequently and Solemnly, *Jer.* 30. 21, 22. and 50. 5. and this upon ſolemn occaſions, and ordinances for that purpoſe; wherein we have opportunity to take freſh hold of it, and to renew our engagements in it.

6. *To improve it.* Againſt temptataitions: 1. *To ſin.* When tempted to ſin, remember the Covenant; is this according to the Covenant? am I not bound to do otherwiſe? Is not my own hand againſt me? As I hope for the priviledge, muſt I not do the duty of

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the Covenant (2 *Tim.* 2. 19. 1 *Cor.* 6. *ult*). I am devoted, and vowed, and eſpouſed to the Lord, and I cannot be free to ſin. 2. *To deſpondency.* Why whatever my condition is, this *well-ordered Covenant* is all *my Salvation, and my deſire,* 2 Sam. 23. 5.

7. *To be ſeriouſly humble, and always mild in their own eyes.* I have nothing by Merit, but all by Grace and free promiſe, and therefore I have cauſe to be humble. And I muſt carry it low, that I may keep firſt the Comforts and Sweetneſs of his Covenant. The
Heb. 2. 4. juſt (*whoſe heart is not lifted up in him*) *lives by faith*; the heart lifted up, ſoon loſes the ſight of Chriſt.

8. *To rejoyce in it, and to be always thankful for it.* This is all my ſafety, and all my joy; all my Salvation and all my Deſire, 2 *Sam.* 23. 5. This Covenant doth bring me in pardon, and grace, and adoption, and is in me through Chriſt the hope of glory. 1. I have nothing without it. 2. Nothing but what I have by it. 3. And I can want nothing with it. This is that which my heart holds by, and which my heart lives upon. Therefore my heart *ſhall rejoyce, and my fleſh ſhall reſt in hope,* Pſal. 16. 8, 9, 10.

4ly, *How do theſe mutually imply one the other, or meet in the ſame effect, and to the ſame purpoſe for believers?*

1. That God remembers his Covenant always, is our priviledg and ſtanding-comfort. We have nothing to ſubſiſt by, if he could forget his free and bleſſed promiſe.

2. It is our duty to be mindful of his Covenant. It is the proper and great work of a Chriſtian, which will branch it ſelf out into all the parts of Religion. The holy man was in the right, that ſaid his great work was, *ne anima ſit ingrata Deo*, his ſtudy and care in all things

was

was, that his Soul might not be unthankful unto God. In order to this, let the Soul be taken up with ſtudy and admiration of Gods Covenant, which will affect and influence him to all manner of holy Converſation and godlineſs.

3. God's remembring his Covenant, is the cauſe of our being mindful of it. His faithfulneſs to it may incite us to the like grateful mindfulneſs of it; and it alſo is the cauſe of it; God remembers it; and therefore we do not forget it: he remebers it to give us the Spirit, by which we are enabled to be mindful of him.

4. Our mindfulneſs of it is the means and condition of deriving the virtue of it to our Souls; and the bringing in a comfortable ſenſe of Gods mindfulneſs of us. As Gods love is the cauſe of our love to him, and our love to him is the Evidence of his love to us: ſo God's mindfulneſs of his Covenant, is the root and cauſe of our ability to be mindful of it, and our being mindful always as we ſhould be of it, is a means of our Evidencing our intereſt therein, and of deriving comfort and ſweetneſs, and benefit therefrom. This is to *continue in his love*, Joh. 15. 9 2 *Chr.* 15. 2. If we forget him, we can have no confidence that he will remember us.

5. Theſe do both conſpire to the holy rejoycing in God. to live a life of thankſgiving, which is the great work of a Chriſtians life. *In all things to give thanks, to rejoyce in the remembrance of his holineſs:* to have the *heart lift up in the ways of God*, as *Jehoſhaphats* was; *to fear the Lord and his goodneſs*, Hoſ. 3. 5. The heart ſet upon the Covenant, has a diſpoſition to be thankful, and to be chearfully holy, and may afford, and

1 Theſ. 5. 18.

2 Chr. 17. 6.

and be able to be ſo: and to know that God is alſo mindful of his Covenant, doth provoke and ſtir him up to be thankful and holy. So that the Soul may be indifferently helped in the Lords ſolemn praiſe, when either it is actually mindful of this Covenant, or doth conſider how he remembers it for ever.

For *USE* briefly.

1. This ſpeaks to ungodly men amongſt us, that neglect the Covenant of God. They are baptized, externally intereſted in it, but are altogether unmindful of it. There is nothing required of them, or which they hate and envy others for practiſing (wherein they differ from them), but it is that which they are themſelves engaged unto. *They that name the name of Chriſt ſhould depart from all iniquity*, 2 Tim. 2. 19. They will be called *Chriſtians*, but if they knew what it truly imports, they would hate the Name as Acts 11. 26. as well as they do the Chriſtian life ſignified thereby. They that *were firſt called Chriſtians at Antioch*, if they had been ſuch Chriſtians as many of us are, the name had ſignified very little, no great matter what Drunkards, and Whores, and Whoremaſters, and unjuſt and oppreſſors are called; indeed any thing *better than Chriſtians*. It is indeed one of the Triumphs of the Devil, to have men fight in his army that are liſted under Chriſt, and do carry Chriſts name, to do his work with. The beſt that can be ſaid of many of them, they are a ſort *of baptized Heathens*; only, for their lives far ſhort of many Heathens, of whom we may ſay (as the Phil 3. 18, 19. Apoſtle did of ſome in his time) we have oft told *you of them, and now tell you weeping*, (for it would make one to weep to think of them, or to Name them)

they

they are the enemies of the Croſs of Chriſt, whoſe end is deſtruction, whoſe God is their belly, whoſe glory is their ſhame, who mind earthly things. They are in Covenant, but mind neither the duty nor priviledges of it. Towards whom God will remember *his Covenant* to *avenge the quarrel of* it upon their Souls to all Eternity, if they repent not. Lev. 26. 25.

2. It ſpeaks to young perſons, that are born within the Covenant, devoted and dedicated to God by Baptiſm; that they would be mindful of the Covenant, that God may remember it for them. Be willing to underſtand what you are engaged to, and what is engaged to you, if you perform the juſt and honourable condition: and be not perverſe and froward as ſome have been. This Covenant is that you muſt be happy by, both here and hereafter. Know therefore *the Lord God of your Father, and ſerve him with a perfect heart and a willing mind*: Labour to know God, be willing to underſtand the terms of our whole nature; by what we are kept from preſent Hell, and upon what terms Grace and Happineſs is yet to be had; labour to underſtand what a one God is, and what is in his Covenant: and how Chriſt came to be neceſſary in this Caſe, and that God is in Chriſt ready to receive you to Favour and Mercy. And be ſure to cloſe with him honeſtly, and ſincerely, and *willingly*: do not ſerve by cumpulſion, meerly to pleaſe your Parents and Superiors, or whilſt they live, and becauſe you have expectance from them: but do it with a *willing mind*, as that which 1 Chr. 29. 9.

is due, and that which is your intereſt and only advantage to be engaged in. O do not hanker after liberty to ſin; let not Religion be your reſtraint, be never quiet till you have begged of God a *willing mind* for all he requires; for do not think that an outſide compliance with the way of your Education will ſerve you; you cannot for ſhame throw off the way you have been bred in (for it is a diſgrace for Children of good Parents to be looſe, even in the eies of thoſe that have no Religion themſelves) and therefore you will keep it up of the cheapeſt and ſlighteſt ſort of the kind that ever you can. But your heart is malignant at the ſame time, and when you can get any thing of worldly advantage for it, you will part with your profeſſion too; but let ſuch perſons know, *that God ſearcheth all hearts, and underſtandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts.* He knows how deep your Religion lies, he knows what you ſecretly think to do: but take this for the concluſion, He is faithful in his Covenant, but he will not be impoſed upon by ſuch as are Treacherous. *If thou ſeek him he will be found of thee,* if thou be faithful and mindful of the Covenant, as thy duty and intereſt to do thy part, he will be true to thee; but if *thou forſake him, he will caſt thee off for ever,* and then thou art undone for evermore.

I would on this occaſion offer at *two* or *three* things both with reſpect to Children and Parents in reference to this Covenant of God, which is all our Salvation, and all our deſire.

1. It were adviſable that it be clearly underſtood how the Covenant of God came in upon the fall, and what is the Tenor of it on both ſides; Gods and mans, and the purport of the Baptiſmal Covenant, in the words of the ſhorteſt Catechiſm by Mr. *Baxter*, p. 9.

The Holy Covenant.

I do believe in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt, according to the particular Articles of the Chriſtian Faith: And heartily repenting of my ſinful life, I do preſently, abſolutely and reſolvedly give up my ſelf to him, my Creator and reconciled God and Father in Chriſt my Saviour and my Sanctifier: Renouncing the Devil, the World and the ſinful deſires of the Fleſh: That takeing up my Croſs, and the denying my ſelf, I may follow Chriſt the Captain of my Salvation to the Death, and live with him in endleſs Glory.

2. That Parents underſtood the nature of Baptiſm, that it is a ſolemnizing of the Covenant: and that they would as ſeriouſly prepare to bring a Child to Baptiſm, as they do to go themſelves to the Lords Supper: and ſo ſeriouſly and ſolemnly take hold of the Covenant for themſelves, and renew it in their own perſon, and to take hold of it for their Child.

3. To hold the Covenant for the Child, whilſt it is not capable to take hold for it ſelf: to plead it ſolemnly and frequently for it, and to inſtruct the Child in it *diligently* according to its capacity; that ſo it may not be a Chriſtian by example, but by Prin-

ciple, and may ſet out with a ſtock and title of its own.

4. That Children take heed to this, Solemnly and explicitely to take up the Chriſtian Title and Covenant in their own perſons; that ſo God may remember it always for them, and they may be always mindful of it. This is an eſtate left you whilſt your Father lives; and the ſooner you have it in your own hands, the better for you and your Father too.

But 3*ly*, I ſhall improve this in a word or two, to thoſe that are truly ſerious.

1. Let it be improved to our ſupport and comfort in all troubles of Life. Let us believe that God always remembers his Covenant.

This may comfort us againſt Temptations, Diſſertions, Great Afflictions, Great Backſlidings, and ſad fits of Deadneſs, The Covenant he will not go from: and this may be ſtrong comfort to us at all times, againſt all ſad appearances of things, and againſt all diſcouragements from inward guilt, God is gracious and ready to forgive, and therefore have I hope ſtill. If we be weak in faith, and can ſcarce think how he ſhould ſhew ſuch glorious things to ſuch poor wretches as we are, and ſo at preſent may *not believe* as we ſhould do; *yet he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himſelf.* He will remember his Covenant for thee, and treat thee according to the terms of it; as a gracious, long-ſuffering, and ever merciful God. Keeping Mercy for Thouſands, *&c.*

2 Tim. 2: 13.

2. Let

2. Let us make it our work and buſineſs to be always mindful of his Covenant, *Pſal.* 25. 14. The heart of the Lord is with them that fear him, *and he will ſhew them his Covenant*; he will ſhew him that fears him, to underſtand it; and ſhew them to fulfil and perform according to it. O ſtrive to live upon it always: That as it is your comfort that God remembers it for ever; ſo let it be your duty *always* to be mindful of it.

And ſince his *heart is ſo enlarged* that he always remembers his Covenant for us, let us (in alluſion to that of the Apoſtle) *for a recompence*, be enlarged alſo towards him. Let the Covenant be ſtill in our thoughts, reign in our hearts, and be the principle and rule of our whole lives. 2 Cor. 6. 11, 12, 13.

And having ſaid a little of Baptiſm, let me accommodate this matter to the Sacrament of the Lords Supper. At ſuch a time, let us be actually mindful of the Covenant, which we come there to Seal and Solemnize. Apply the Covenant to all the bleſſed ends and intents of it: let us hope to have it Sealed to us at ſuch a time. To allude to that of Gen. 9. 15, 16. *I ſet my bow in the Clouds*; and *when I behold it* (ſays God) *I will remember my Covenant*, That I will not deſtroy the World with Water any more. He hath appointed this Bread and Wine, to be alſo a ſign in a greater matter; and he hath ſaid of other great promiſes, That they ſhall be *unto him as the Waters of Noah*, Iſa. 54. 9, 10. All his promiſes ſhall be as fully kept and fulfilled, as that hath been. Take this Bread and Wine, and recieve it as he hath ap-

appointed, and ſay, This is a ſign of the Covenant: plead, that God would look upon it and remember his Covenant for thee. Take hold of it for thy Soul, and labour to renew your own part of it, to be faithful in the Covenant for ever, that you may feel your ſelf ſweetly helped to be mindful of the Covenant, to be duely and ſutably affected with it, and may find the ſweet effects to your Soul of God remembring his Covenant for you in particular, and dealing with you according to the Royal purport of it, for the increaſe of your Grace and Peace, and hope of Eternal Life.

T U66

FINIS.